

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are presently pending in the application. Claims 7-10 have been added. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge Applicants' Claim of Priority submitted in the Preliminary Amendment dated October 29, 2003, and to acknowledge receipt of the Certified Copy of the Priority Document submitted March 29, 2004.

In addition, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge receipt of and to approve the Formal Drawings submitted on March 24, 2004.

Turning to the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by JP 63-28926 (hereafter "JP '926").

Claim 1 has been amended to further define the present invention.

For the following reasons, the prior art rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Applicant respectfully submits that JP '926 does not teach or suggest an armrest apparatus including wherein when the armrest is stored, the armrest further rotates in a direction which is opposite to the opening direction, the canceling block and the free side hook of the lock spring move integrally along with the lock-canceling cam portion, as recited in amended Claim 1.

In JP '926, as shown in Figs. 5 to 8, when the armrest is operated to rotate in a direction which is opposite to the opening direction from a stored state, because a stopper portion 32 restricts a movement of a free side hook 44, the armrest is restricted in its further rotation. Further, when the armrest is forcibly operated to rotate in the above-mentioned

direction, because the free side hook 44 fits in a concaved portion 43, there is a possibility of deformation or damage of the concaved portion 43.

In contrast, according to the present invention, as shown in Figs. 3A to 3F, when the armrest is operated to rotate in the above-mentioned direction, the canceling block 8 and the free side hook 5b move integrally along with the lock-canceling cam portion 7b.

Accordingly, there are no members which restrict movement of the free side hook 5b. Therefore, there is no possibility of deformation or damage of the canceling block 8 or the spring 5.

Further, in JP '926, it is necessary to design or accommodate the following two states in agreement: the first state is that the free side hook 28b abuts with the stopper portion 32, and the second state is that the free side hook 28b fits in the concaved portion 43. Therefore, the design of the armrest is limited in flexibility, and a high accuracy of members is required.

In contrast, according to the present invention, the canceling block 8 abuts with the free side hook 5b. In other words, the canceling block 8 contacts with the spring 5 from one direction. Accordingly, the armrest of the present invention receives less damages and is constituted simply relative to that of JP '926 in which the concaved portion 43 sandwiches the free side hook 43. Therefore, the flexibility of design of the armrest is improved and the required accuracy of members can be reduced. Therefore, cost of the armrest can be reduced.

For the above reasons, according to the present invention, it is possible to provide an armrest which is hard to break and made with low costs.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is neither anticipated by nor obvious over the JP reference, and the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should be withdrawn.

Further, with respect to amended Claim 2, the Applicant respectfully submits that JP '926 does not teach or suggest an armrest apparatus including wherein the cancellation block includes a spring pin which abuts against the lock-cancelling cam portion when the armrest body is moved in a storing direction, and against the re-lock cam portion when the armrest body is moved in an opening direction, as recited in Claim 2.

Rather, JP '926 is silent with respect to this feature.

Accordingly, Claim 2 is patentable over the applied prior art.

Still further, the Applicant respectfully submits JP '926 does not teach or suggest an armrest apparatus wherein the rotation plate has a stamped-out projected portion which limits the range of rotation of the cancellation block, as recited in Claim 4.

Rather, JP '926 is silent with respect to such stamped-out projection portions 3b as shown in Fig. 1 of the present invention.

Accordingly, Claim 4 is neither anticipated by nor obvious over JP '926, and the rejection of Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), should be withdrawn.

With respect to Claim 7, the Applicant respectfully submits that JP '926 does not teach or suggest an armrest including wherein the canceling block has a flat portion which abuts with the free-side hook and protruded portion which abuts with the lock-canceling cam portion.

Rather, the JP reference is silent with respect to such a flat portion on a lower surface of the front end portion of cancellation apparatus 38, which supports free-side hook 28b. Instead, the JP reference teaches an indentation 43 of the cancellation apparatus 38 in which free-side hook 28b is inserted.

Accordingly, Claim 7 is neither anticipated by nor obvious over JP '926, and the rejection of Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should be withdrawn.

Further, since Claims 2-10 depend from Claim 1, they are also patentably distinguishable over JP '926 for the reasons cited above with respect to Claim 1.

If the Examiner believes that there is any issue which could be resolved by a telephone or personal interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such an extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 04-1061.

Respectfully submitted,

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